IN THE CLAIMS:

Amend the following claims:

1. A fluorescence observing apparatus having:

an excitation filter unit for transmitting only exciting light with particular wave-lengths, of illuminating light; and

an absorption filter unit for transmitting only fluorescent light produced from a specimen by irradiating the specimen with the exciting light to block the exciting light,

wherein space between a half-value wavelength on a long-wavelength side of the excitation filter unit and a half-value wavelength on a short-wavelength side of the absorption filter unit is in a range of 6-12 nm.

2. A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein variations in half-value wavelengths of the excitation filter unit and the absorption filter unit where humidity is changed from 10% to 95% are within 0.5 nm.

3. (currently amended) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the excitation filter unit and/or the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of at least 90 layers.

4. (currently amended) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein each of the excitation filter unit and the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of SiO_2 and Ta_2O_5.

5. (currently amended) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, incorporated in an optical system of a microscope.

6. (currently amended) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, incorporated in an optical system of an endoscope.

7. (currently amended) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein each of the excitation filter unit and the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of SiO_2 and Ta_2O_5, and the excitation filter unit and/or the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of at least 90 days.

8. (currently amended) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, incorporated in an optical system of a microscope, wherein each of the excitation filter unit and the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of SiO_2 and $Ta2O_5$, and the excitation filter unit and/or the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of at least 90 layers.

9. (currently amended) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, incorporated in an optical system of an endoscope, wherein each of the excitation filter unit and the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of SiO_2 and $Ta2O_5$, and the excitation filter unit and/or the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of at least 90 layers.

Add the following new claims:

10. (new) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the excitation filter unit and/or the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of at least 90 layers.

11. (new) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein each of the excitation filter unit and the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of SiO_2 and Ta_2O_5.

12. (new) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 2, incorporated in an optical system of a microscope.

13. (new) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 2, incorporated in an optical system of an endoscope.

14. (new) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein each of the excitation filter unit and the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of SiO_2 and Ta_2O_5, and the excitation filter unit and/or the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of at least 90 days.

15. (new) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 2, incorporated in an optical system of a microscope, wherein each of the excitation filter unit and the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of SiO_2 and $Ta2O_5$, and the excitation filter unit and/or the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of at least 90 layers.

16. (new) A fluorescence observing apparatus according to claim 2, incorporated in an optical system of an endoscope, wherein each of the excitation filter unit and the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of SiO_2 and $Ta2O_5$, and the excitation filter unit and/or the absorption filter unit includes a multilayer film comprised of at least 90 layers.